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RR RUEHQU
DE RUEHPU #0128 0191929
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
R 191929Z JAN 06
FM AMEMBASSY PORT AU PRINCE
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 2103
INFO RUEHZH/HAITI COLLECTIVE
RUEHBR/AMEMBASSY BRASILIA 0909
RUEHSA/AMEMBASSY PRETORIA 0743
RUEHQU/AMCONSUL QUEBEC 0356
RUMIAAA/HQ USSOUTHCOM J2 MIAMI FL
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK 0791

UNCLAS PORT AU PRINCE 000128

SIPDIS

SENSITIVE
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STATE FOR WHA/CAR
S/CRS
SOUTHCOM ALSO FOR POLAD
STATE PASS AID FOR LAC/CAR
INR/IAA (BEN-YEHUDA)
WHA/EX PLEASE PASS USOAS

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [KDEM](#) [AA](#) [HA](#)

SUBJECT: HAITI ELECTIONS: FURTHER ON ANTI-L'ESPWA ATTACK IN
ST. MARC

REF: PAUP 125

¶1. This message is sensitive but unclassified-- protect accordingly.

¶2. (U) Further details emerging from St. Marc regarding the January 18 attack on Preval campaign preparations indicate that a dispute over the location of the event precipitated the incident. According to press reports, Preval's L'Espwa party supporters erected a platform for the event in a location that obstructed streets and blocked trucks from making deliveries. The mayor, a member of the anti-Aristide RAMICOS faction blamed for the attack, reportedly challenged the L,Espwa supporters because they had neither a permit nor permission from the police for their rally. The party workers responded that the platform was for the chief, and thus could not be moved, refusing the mayor's offer to move the structure to the public square. The mayor then warned L,Espwa that RAMICOS would remove the structure. Hours later perpetrators believed to be RAMICOS members set fire to L,Espwa's campaign office as well as the platform, a vehicle, and a large poster of Preval (reftel).

¶3. (U) The mayor publicly lamented that violence had resulted because of the dispute, but condemned the attitude of the L,Espwa party members who, according to him, had no respect for the law. Victor Benoit, president of the FUSION political party and a prominent member of the anti-Preval coalition "Entente for Democracy and Modernity" also publicly condemned political violence, noting that other political parties had been victimized and that everyone should be free to hold meetings.

¶4. (SBU) Comment: As reported in reftel, any violent incident directly relating to the presidential campaign is cause for concern. These details indicate, however, that this incident appears to be more a flare-up of ongoing tension in St. Marc, rather than an incident with national implications. Benoit's response was heartening: there seems to be some recognition among the major candidates that campaign tempers need to be cooled. End comment.
CARNEY